

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 002634

SIPDIS

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD  
WHA ALSO FOR USOAS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI'S ELECTIONS DG TAKES LEAD, WILL OTHERS FOLLOW

REF: A. PORT-AU-PRINCE 2617  
[B](#). PORT-AU-PRINCE 2618

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Douglas M. Griffiths for reasons  
1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#). (C) Summary. Electoral Director General Jacques Bernard is working to streamline elections preparations and ignoring unworkable by-laws developed for the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) and the newly-formed electoral support committee. Bernard expects the CEP to issue the final approved lists of presidential candidates, including Dumarsais Simeus and Jean Marie Cherestal, and national-level candidates on Friday, October 28, one day after the promulgation of the decree removing the Supreme Court from the electoral appeals process. Bernard is impressed with the preparations already made by the UN mission (MINUSTAH) and the OAS and believes he can organize elections in time for a February 7 transition, barring any interference. He is counting on Prime Minister Latortue to prevent the nationality and support committees from further interfering in elections preparations. We are encouraged by Bernard's professionalism and take-charge attitude, but disquieted by signs that the both nationality and support committee members continue to expect to play an active role. End Summary

Bernard in Charge  
-----

[2](#). (C) Bernard told Emboffs on October 22 that he had demanded executive authority from the Interim Government of Haiti (IGOH) and had simply refused to operate under the unworkable revised by-laws approved by the IGOH for the CEP and the support committee (ref A). Those by-laws, finalized on October 11 but not yet promulgated, maintain the CEP's operational role and define the support committee as a "decision-making body" with responsibility for all aspects of the electoral process. Bernard said he had successfully demanded that the CEP stay out of operational matters and that he would move to see that the support committee effectively disbands. He added that he had succeeded in convincing the CEP to cease any further moves to re-examine the residency status of some presidential candidates. (Note: The CEP had on October 11 requested the government's help soliciting foreign embassies for residency information regarding 12 presidential candidates. End note.)

[3](#). (C) With one week of intensive meetings under his belt, Bernard expressed confidence that he could pull elections preparations together in time for a first round of voting before Christmas and a transition by February 7. He was impressed by the planning already undertaken by MINUSTAH and the OAS and expressed confidence that they could resolve the remaining logistical challenges with his support. Bernard is concentrating on further limiting the amount of time necessary to rule on challenges to the candidates register and strengthening local electoral office (BEC) and voting center administration. He said he had obtained the PM's agreement that he would staff his office from "the best" personnel from government ministries. Citing their incompetence, Bernard has refused to employ any of the current CEP staff.

Candidate Lists on October 28  
-----

[4](#). (C) Bernard said he had secured the Justice Minister's agreement to drop any challenges to presidential candidates and allow the CEP to include Dumarsais Simeus and Jean Marie Cherestal, both of whom won Supreme Court appeals after having their candidacies rejected by the CEP (ref B). The CEP was set to publish the final lists of presidential and national-level candidates on Friday, October 28. The CEP had to wait until the government published the decree removing the Supreme Court from the electoral appeals process. The next edition of the government Monitor comes out on October 27 and Bernard said the CEP would wait one day in order to ensure that appeals to the Supreme Court did not delay finalization of the national-level list. Bernard said he would enlist the support of the PM if the nationality committee attempted to interfere.

Support/Nationality Committees Still in the Way?

-----  
15. (C) Bernard's claims of the Justice Minister's support notwithstanding, Dorleans on October 21 re-affirmed the nationality committee's intention to gather information from the presidential candidates and prosecute anyone who was not truthful. (Note: The nationality committee delivered questionnaires to the presidential candidates the same day. End Note.) Dorleans' remarks followed President Alexandre's October 17 speech announcing the formation of the nationality committee. Using unusually forceful language, Alexandre attacked the Supreme Court's ruling on Simeus, implied that Simeus might have bribed its members, and insisted "foreigners" would be prohibited from taking office. Recent remarks from members of the support committee Pierre-Richard Duchemin (CEP) and Danielle Magloire (Council of Wise Persons) also signaled that the support committee would continue to play an active role. They announced on October 23 that that voters must present their national identity cards and would not be able to use their registration receipts, as previously foreseen.

Comment

-----  
16. (C) Bernard's commitment and energy are impressive, but he appears still to lack for allies who share his sense of urgency and focus among CEP members and IGOH officials. Duchemin and Magloire's statement is especially perplexing, as it potentially adds another unnecessary hurdle to elections preparations. At the very least, Bernard will need the PM to intercede with the nationality and support committees and order them to back off. Although the PM's performance to date gives us little confidence, he did exhibit surprising energy and purpose in recruiting and installing Bernard. Asked how he had been able to secure CEP cooperation so far with so little formal authority, Bernard said he has made clear to everyone that they must accept his management of the electoral process or he will vacate his post. Bernard has an immediate test to pass: the CEP must issue final candidate lists by the end of this week for a first round to be held before Christmas.  
CARNEY